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Teaching English Pronunciation In Cape Verde

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O Júri

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Dedictory

I dedicate this monographia to my mother “Felizmina” who is everything for me, to my girlfriend “Miriam” and especially to my son “Tiago”.

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Table of contents

Introduction	6
I-Theory of pronunciation and phonetics	
1.1-Pronunciation- definition and importance	7
1.2-Phonetics- definitions	8
1.3-The vocal tract	13
1.4-The Phases of speech	14
1.5-The features of spoken language	16
1.6-Phonology	18
II. Pronunciation in a foreign language	
2.1-Interference of native and official language in learning a foreign language	19
2.2-The importance of pronunciation when learning a foreign language	20
2.3-Pronunciation in the capeverdean syllabus	21
III. How to Teach English pronunciation in Cape Verde	
3.1-Methods and techniques used in teaching pronunciation	23
3.2-Problems found during pronunciation teaching	25
3.3-Capeverdean teachers: native vs. non native speakers/ qualified vs. none qualified teachers: their influence	27
3.4-English standards	28
3.5-Some weaknesses found in capeverdean student's pronunciation	30
IV. Solutions	
4.1-Approach taken by the Ministry of Education	32
4.2-Some Alternatives solutions	33
Conclusion	36
Bibliography	38
Appendix	39

Introduction

When one learns their native language, they do not have to consider the many aspects related to Academic language learning. They start speaking/imitating the first sounds they hear and after some years they are able to speak fluently and accurately. The language is learnt naturally in the social environment, so everyday people learned a new word.

However, when we learn languages at school, especially if it is a foreign language, things happen differently. By this age, one has already learned one or more languages. This learning at school will be a new beginning, but under the influence of the languages learned before. At school, languages are learned in both spoken and written form and both of these forms have their specificities; although, we still find some teachers who do not give attention to pronunciation which will affect students even in the advanced levels.

In this work I will analyse one of the most important aspects of using a language in its spoken form – **pronunciation**- the way to say a sound correctly.

Pronunciation of the target language is a skill that occupied a primary position within the academic audio-lingual framework but was relegated to the background when the emphasis shifted from a controlled to a more communicative approach to EF pedagogy. Like all subjects in the field, language pronunciation has its own rules and requires specific methods, techniques and conditions such as laboratories, tests, workbooks, listening materials, visual aids and other teaching materials.

In some countries, however, the situation is not ideal. Some countries do not possess the economic resources to provide their students with the materials needed and have a lack of qualified teachers in their schools. Overcrowded classrooms in beginning levels cause problems. In particular, a country such as Cape Verde is affected by all of these problems and more.

In spite of all these problems teachers try to use the few resources available, adapting or using alternative methods to make students learn the most they can with few resources. Is it possible to, with such conditions, make the learning process effective? A search for this question will guide this work. This research will be mainly based on beginning level (7th grade). It will be more focused on this level because it is the first and maybe the most important phase of any learning process. Everything begins in the first lessons and depending on the way they are taught, it will influence the success or failure of the pronunciation process.

Chapter I

A View of Pronunciation and Phonetics

1.1-Pronunciation

Pronunciation is generally defined as the act or way of producing sounds or to utter sounds. Related to the word “pronounce” it is the way in which a language or a particular word is pronounced or said, or the way a particular person pronounces or says the words of a language, “to pronounce a word is to make sounds of a word or of a letter in a particular way” (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary).

By these definitions we can see why pronunciation is such a broad subject. Pointing out the ideal pronunciation is not easy. Each person who speaks the same language has his or her own way of pronouncing the sounds of words, and the reasons for these differences are related to culture, geography, society, and other conditions. Pronunciation differs from region to region. That is why we have different dialects even here in Cape Verde.

Why is pronunciation important?

As Richard A. Murphy (1987) said, “correct pronunciation of the target language is a skill that occupied a primary position within the audio-lingual frame work, but was relegated to the background when the emphasis shifted from a controlled to a more communicative approach to Foreign Language pedagogy” (p.36). The main objectives are to be understood by people who we are talking with, and to be able to hold a conversation and communicate with other people. According to Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich (1992) in *Teaching American English Pronunciation*, “the great variability in pronunciation accuracy of learners has led other researchers to conclude that there are socio-cultural factors that largely determine this success or lack of success in achieving native like pronunciation” (p. 4).

The other factors affecting the acquisition of the sound system of a second language are related to the personality of the learner. Learners who are out-going, confident and willing to take risks probably have more opportunities to practice their pronunciation of the second language simply because they are more often involved in interaction with native speakers.

There are some rules that students must follow for correct pronunciation to make them fluent and accurate. Nowadays, these are not taken into account; however, we know

that to use a formal language for a formal purpose, such as an academic purpose, these rules are very important because the language has a selected and required pronunciation for purposes of accuracy.

When thinking about education, it is very important for teachers to be careful of the way they pronounce words because they are models for their students, especially if they are dealing with foreign learners. These kind of students sometimes do not have the receptive competence native speakers have and will produce words respective to what they have received. In order to be an effective instructor, one must be prepared to describe how certain sounds are produced physically, especially if students are not able to achieve an acceptable pronunciation by simple imitation. Also, a teacher may use various techniques to achieve adequate standards of pronunciation.

1.2-Phonetics

Phonetics is considered the “systematic study of human speech sounds” (J.C. Catford, 1988, p.1). Talking about phonetics we can take into account, that being a phonetician requires describing and classifying all the sounds that are produced by the human vocal tract. Although any person who works with language has some basic knowledge of phonetics, it is very important, especially for teachers of English as a second language, to use phonetics well in order to diagnose and correct the pronunciation errors made by their students. The teacher does this by showing them both the theoretical and practical side of pronunciation. Phonetics also allows teachers to understand the connection between spelling and orthographic problems and choose ways to overcome these problems.

Consonants and vowels

A basic distinction, in terms of how sounds are formed, is made between consonants and vowels. Consonants involve a narrowing in the mouth which in turn causes some obstruction of the air stream. With vowels, air passes rather freely through the mouth because there is very little narrowing. In order to become aware of this difference between consonants and vowels, pronounce the word “palm.” You can feel your mouth widening when you pronounce the vowel sound and narrowing when you pronounce the initial and final consonants.

According to Richard A. Murphy (1987), in *A Training Manual for English Instructors*, there is a description that shows the differences between the systems:

The consonant System:

The consonants have three basic characteristics:

- 1- *Place of articulation*- the place in the mouth where the air stream is obstructed.
- 2- *Manner of articulation*- the way in which the air stream is obstructed.
- 3- *Voicing*- whether there is vibration of the vocal cords or not.

The **place of articulation** contains six places in the mouth where the air stream is obstructed in the formation of the consonants: we have sounds made with the **lips** (both lips- *bilabial*; lower lip and upper teeth – *labiodental*); sounds made with the **tip of the tongue** (tip of the tongue and the teeth- *interdental*); tip of the tongue and tooth ridge- *alveolar*); sounds made with the **blade of the tongue** (blade of the tongue and hard palate- *alveopalatal*); sounds made with the **back of the tongue**(back of the tongue and soft palate- *velar*).

The **manner of articulation** refers to the way in which the air stream is obstructed, which characterizes how all consonant sounds are achieved. At the different places of articulation in the mouth, there are several basic ways that the air stream can be obstructed. According to Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich (1992) we have different manners of articulation (p.18):

Stops - Complete obstruction of the air stream (*bilabial, alveolar, velar*).

fricatives - Partial obstruction of the air stream (*labiodental, interdental, alveolar, alveopalatal*).

affricates - Complex consonant sounds (*alveopalatal*)

nasals - Sounds made with the air escaping through the nose (*bilabial, alveolar, velar*)

Voicing is the way in which consonant sounds differ from each other. In order to understand voicing, think about the pronunciation of the initial consonants in the words “sue” and “zoo.” “sue” is pronounced with a /s/, while “zoo” is pronounced with a /z/. The /s/ is voiceless and the /z/ is voiced.

The consonants are produced by modifying the flow of air from the lungs in various ways and to varying degrees. In most cases this is accomplished by at least two parts of the oral area which gives a certain shape to the air passage through their position in relation to each other. These parts are referred to as articulators and the way in which they modify the flow of air to produce different consonants is termed the manner of articulation. In addition

some consonants are distinguished from each other by the presence or absence of vibration in the vocal cords, two elastic like bands situated in the lower throat. These are known as voiced (b, d, g) or voiceless (p, t, k) consonants. The following consonants are grouped into manner of articulation; voiced and voiceless pairs are listed together.

A- Stops: the air is cut by pressing the articulators tightly together, then released very suddenly:

p	b	as articulators - upper lip/lower lip
t	d	as articulators – tip of tongue /gum behind upper teeth
k	g	as articulators- back of tongue/back of roof of the mouth

B- Affricates: the air is cut off by pressing the articulators tightly together, then released and forced through a narrow opening between the articulators:

c	j	as articulators- front part of the tongue/palate
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C- Fricatives: the air is forced through a narrow opening between the articulators:

f	v	as articulators- lower lip/upper teeth
θ	ð	“ “ - tip of tongue /upper teeth
š	ž	“ “ - tip of tongue/ gum behind upper teeth
s	z	“ “ - front part of tongue/ palate
h		“ “ - none, except the walls of the throat

D- Nasals: the air flows freely through the nose. The articulators are pressed together.

m		as articulators – upper lip/lower lip
n		“ “ - tip of tongue/gum behind upper
ŋ		“ “ - back of tongue/back of the roof of the mouth.

E- Lateral: the air flows freely through the mouth on both sides of the tongue

l		as articulators –tip of tongue/gum behind upper teeth.
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F- Retroflex: the air flows through the mouth.

r		as articulators-the tongue is curved up and back in the mouth.
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Note: See Appendix D for further visual description.

G- Semivowels- the air flows through the mouth

w as articulators- both lips are rounded as if to pronounce the vowel sound of shoe.

Y as articulators- the front of the tongue is drawn up against the palate as if to pronounce the vowel sound of beat

Notes:

- 1- The following consonants are voiceless: p, t, k, θ, s, and c. All other consonants and all vowels are voiced.
- 2- The consonants p, t and k, have two varieties each:
 - a) a strong puff of air appears when they occur at the beginning of a word or before a loud syllable.
 - b) no puff of air appears when they occur in other positions.
- 3- **ŋ** does occur at the beginning of words in English.

The vowel system:

We can find classification of the ***tongue high*** (high, mid and low positions).

Frontness/backness of the tongue- (front, central and back positions).

Lip rounding- there are four vowels made with lip rounding: the back vowels in “boot”, “book”, “boat” and “bought”.

The English vowel system is divided into simple vowels and diphthongs. All are produced with an interrupted flow of air through the oral cavity, the shape of which is modified by the position and or movement of the tongue.

A- Simple vowels: there two factors which are significant in producing simple vowels in English: whether a certain part of the tongue is raised or lowered and which part of the tongue is involved. This is illustrated in the seven simple vowels as follows:

i as in **sit**: the front portion of the tongue is raised.

e as in **set**: the front portion of the tongue is lowered somewhat from the position for **i**.

æ as in **sat**: the front portion of the tongue is lowered considerably from the position for **e**.

ə as in **serve**: the central portion of the tongue is in the same middle position as the front part was for **e**.

ʌ as in **nut**: the central portion of the tongue is lowered considerably from the position for **a**.

u as in **bull**: the back portion of the tongue is raised.

ɔ as in **ball**: the back portion of the tongue is raised considerably from the position for **u**.

a as in **father**: the middle portion of the tongue is lowered

Note: See appendix C.

Off-glides- the symbols used to represent the tense vowels of English, /iy/, /ey/, /uw/, and /ow/, have two parts. The front vowels /iy/ and /ey/ are composed of the pure vowels

B- Diphthongs: Are combinations of two vowels or vowel-like sounds. In English the major diphthongs are produced by placing the tongue in the position for producing a simple vowel, then moving to either a high front (i) or a high back (u) position.

There are seven major diphthongs in English:

The symbols used to represent the tense vowels of English, /iy/, /ey/, /uw/, and /ow/, have two parts. The front vowels /iy/ and /ey/ are composed of the pure vowels /i/ and /e/ followed by the semi-vowel /y/.

The back vowels /uw/ and /ow/ are composed of the pure vowels /u/ and /o/ followed by the semi-vowel /w/. These semi-vowels are usually referred to as *off-glides* and reflect the fact that there is movement of the tongue during the pronunciation of each of the tense vowels.

As Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich (1992) said, “in many languages of the world, the tense vowels are not followed by off-glides, but are pure vowels (p. 33). Thus, when ESL students pronounce the tense vowels of English, they often omit the semi-vowel, producing vowels that sound to the English ear more like the lax counterparts of these tense vowels, that is /ɪ/, /ɛ/, and /ʊ/.

The vowel /ɜr/ as in *fern*, *serve*, *sir*, *fur*, *heard*. All of these vowel-plus-/r/ combinations are pronounced in the same way. This sound is represented phonetically with the symbol combination /ɜr/. Although there are two symbols to represent this sound, it is really a single sound and should be taught as such. This vowel sound can be described as an **r**-coloured mid central vowel. In other words, it has characteristics of both the schwa (/ə/, as in *machine*) and the /r/ sound. It is like the schwa in that it is a mid central vowel and like the /r/ in that the tongue curls back slightly.

C- The **semi-vowel** /h/ is produced by breathing out and the tongue and lips assume the position of whatever vowel follows it.

Thus /h/ is made differently depending on the nature of the following vowel. Consider how you pronounce /h/ in the words below for example:

Heat hat hoot hot.

In these words, the /h/ takes on the position of the vowels /iy/, /ae/, /uw/ and /a/, respectively. We can thus see why /h/ is often described as a voiceless vowel. The mouth is in the position of the preceding vowel, but there is no vibration of the vocal cords as there is with vowels.

D- Semi-vowels- such as **w**, the lips are rounded and the back of the tongue approaches to the soft palate. In fact, the tongue and lips are in approximately the same position in the pronunciation of the high, back vowel /uw/. The primary difference between /w/ and /uw/ is that /uw/ occupies the centre of a syllable whereas /w/ occupies a peripheral position in a syllable.

Similarly, the semi-vowel /y/ and the high, front vowel /iy/ are produced with the tongue in approximately in the same position. Again, the primary difference between the two sounds is that /iy/ occupies a central position in a syllable. This is, more generally, the difference between vowels and semi-vowels.

If students have difficulties in pronouncing words such as “would” and “year,” ESL teachers can exploit the similarity between the semi-vowels and their corresponding vowels. Most frequently the difficulty with such words arises because students omit the word-initial semi-vowels. Teachers can tell students to make two identical vowels in succession and to emphasize the second of the identical vowels.

iy as in **seen**: the tongue is in the position for **i** and the front moves even higher.

ey as in **sane**: the tongue is in the position for **e** and moves to a very high **i** position.

ay as in **sign**: the tongue is in the position for **a** and moves to a very high **i** position.

y as in **boil**: the tongue is in the position for **o** and moves to a very high **i** position.

uw as in **shoe**: the tongue is in position for **u** and the back moves to an even higher position.

ow as in **so**: the tongue is in the position for **o**, the back portion halfway between **u**, which is high, and **o** which is low. It is then raised to very high **u** position.

aw as in **how**: the tongue is in the position for **a** and moves to a very high **u** position.

1.3-The vocal tract

The vocal tract is the mechanical or physical apparatus use to produce the sounds we say. It includes the entire respiratory tract, from lung to nose and mouth. So it consists of all the parts of human body used to produce vocal sounds.

In the sound producing process the use of respiratory organs is essential because everything happens with the air flow from the lungs to the nose and mouth, so without breathing it is impossible to produce sounds. The lungs, by contraction, blow the air through the bronchi and later through the trachea. Then the air goes through the larynx, which produce a vibration. The lungs can expand to draw in half a gallon or so of air, and can contract to blow out a like quantity: in speech they can contract quite slowly.

There are two tubes leading from the bronchi which unite in a larger tube – the trachea, also called – windpipe. Near the upper end of the windpipe there is a piston (the larynx) that can slide up and down for an inch and so. You can feel the front of the larynx-piston as a projection in the front of your neck (the “Adam’s apple”) and you can also feel that it can slide up and down – this is especially noticeable when you swallow. The larynx is usually more prominent in men than in women but the swallowing movement can easily be felt by both. Within the piston there is a valve the glottis (the space between the vocal cords or vocal folds). The glottis valve can be tightly closed or opened to varying or else rapidly and rhythmically opened and shut in the course of speech; it also controls the passage of air flow in small or big quantity during the production of sounds.

There is a difference in men’s sound production (voice) and women’s because men have a bigger larynx than women in general that is why men have stronger voices than women. Above the glottis we have two channels, the vocal cavity-the mouth, and the nasal cavity, that can be used together or separately by the velum or soft palate or tongue. The tongue is highly mobile and with the lips and teeth can control the air flow before going out the mouth and/or nose.

The production of sounds is divided in two phases: the organic phase which is the phase that occurs in the vocal tract before the production of sounds, and the aerodynamic phase which is the flow of air from the lungs until the release through the mouth or nose generating the sounds we produce when we speak.

See appendix E.

1.4- The Phases of Speech

Normally speech sounds are made by the air moving outward from the lungs through the mouth or nose. Different speech sounds results when then the air stream is altered in some way by the positioning of various parts of the mouth. Some sounds are made as a

result of the lips altering the air stream while other sounds are made as a result of the tongue altering the air stream.

We have to take in account that the process of speech does not consist only of the production of sounds and words but also other factors to be kept in mind. So when we need to talk about something, it is very important to conceptualize what we are supposed to say and encode such as conceptualization in order to put it in the right grammar form of the language in use. After that comes the message and this is when the production of sounds happens.

These stages of the speaking process are called the phases of speech that start in the speaker, and culminate in the hearer decoding the utterance. We also can say the phases of speech are organized in the following order:

- 1- **Neurolinguistic phase**- which is the phase where the speaker does the encoding, conceptualization, selection, sequencing and programs the timing to externalize the message. The phonetic part of the speech process begins with the execution of a short term neural programme in the central nervous system which is triggered by the lexico-grammatical structure of the utterance and determines the nature and the sequencing of everything that follows.
- 2- **Neuromuscular phase**- is the transmission of out bound neural (brain) impulses to our nerves in order to contract producing the sounds. The muscles can contract in whole or in part successively or simultaneously, more or less strongly.
- 3- **Organic phase**- The muscular contraction occurring in this neuromuscular phase, the organs to which these muscles are attached adopt particular postures or make particular movements – the rib cage may contract, the vocal cords in the larynx may be brought close together, the tongue adopt a particular configuration. In short we can say that the sequel to the neuromuscular is a posturing or movement of whole organs in the vocal tract.
- 4- **Aerodynamic phase**- is the dilation, compression and flow of air by the organs, in and through the vocal tract. They compress the air or dilate it and set it moving in various ways – in rapid puffs, in sudden bursts, in a smooth flow, in a rough, eddying, turbulent stream and so on.
- 5- **Acoustic phase**- is the propagation of the sound waves from speaker's vocal tract. The sound waves are generated by aerodynamic events. In the acoustic phase an air borne sound wave radiates from the speaker's mouth and reaches the ear of anyone within hearing distance, including the speaker himself.

- 6- **Neuroreceptive phase**- here the sound waves are received and encoded by the listener as natural impulses so, is the peripheral auditory stimulation and transmission of inbound neural impulses. The neural impulses from the nerve endings travel up the auditory nerve to the brain, where they give rise to sensations of sounds.
- 7- **Neurolinguistic identification**- the impulses are decoded as specific speech sound. The identification is seen as particular speech sounds that are usually below the threshold of consciousness. In the actual exchange of conversation, attention is directed more to the meaning of what is said than to the sounds by which that meaning is manifested (Catford, 1988, p. 3-5).

1.5- Features of spoken language

There are some areas we need to know about in the pronunciation of English - apart from speed and volume – which are intimately connected with meaning.

Sounds - words are made up of individual sounds (or phonemes). For example “beat” = /b+i: +t/ (i: is the symbol for the sound “ee”), “coffee” = /kɒfi:/ and “cease” = /si:s/.

Sounds are represented here by phonetic symbols (/b/, /i:/ and /k/ for example). This is because there is no one to one correspondence between written letters and spoken sounds. Thus the “c” of “cat” is pronounced differently from the “c” of “cease,” it is the same as the “c” of “coffee.” Though “though and rough” all have the “ou” spelling it is pronounced differently in each case. Different spellings can have the same sound too: “plane and gain,” both have the same vowel sound, but they are spelt differently. By changing one sound, we can change the word and its meaning. If we replace the sound /b/ with the sound /m/, for example we get “meat” instead of “beat.” And if we change /i:/ to /I/ we get “bit” instead of “beat.” There are differences in the speech sound transmission. During the transmission the speech production, is perceived as an overlapping of sound patterns that consists in variation of different kinds such as stress, intonation and rhythm. These changes are named as “prosodic features of spoken language.” They are restricted to the oral use of the language; although, they can be marked while using language in its written form. The reader can or cannot use them according to his familiarity.

According to Catford (1988) and Richard A. Murphy it is important to take into account some different features (p. 172-179).

Stress- is the place where emphasis is placed on words and sounds. It is related to the way the muscular energy is released to blow the air while the production of speech sounds. Primary stress symbolized by an acute accent mark (‘), (Ex: I’n^f) indicates the loudest syllable in a word and is often combined with a high pitch to produce the strongest syllable in short utterances or sentences. The stressed syllable (the syllable that carries the main stress) is that part of a word or phrase which has the greatest emphasis because the speaker increases the volume or change in the pitch of their voice when saying that syllable, e.g. “important”, “complain”, “medicine.” In many longer words, there is both a main stress and a secondary stress, e.g. – interpretation, where “ter” has the secondary stress and “ta” the main stress. In addition, different varieties of English can often stress words differently. For example, British English speakers usually say “advertisement,” whereas some American speakers say “advisement.” The placing of stress can also affect the meaning of a word. For example, “import” is a noun but “import” is a verb.

In phrases and sentences, we give special emphasis to certain parts of the sentence (by changing our pitch, increasing the volume) e.g. “I’m a teacher because I like people.” But we could change the meaning of the sentence by placing the stress somewhere else, for example, “I’m a teacher because I like people.” You can imagine this being said as an angry response to someone asking a teacher to do something terrible to their students. If, on the other hand the sentence is said with the main stress on the word “I” it is suggested that this is what makes the speaker different from others who do not like people.

Pitch- describes the level at which you speak. Some people have high-pitched voices; others say things in a low-pitched voice. When we pitch the words we say, we may use a variety of different levels: higher pitch when we are excited or terrified for example, but lower when we are sleepy or bored. There are three degrees of relative pitch in English, symbolized by “1” for the lowest, “3” for the highest, and “2” for the one in between. These numbers are used in combination with each and with stress symbols to describe intonation phrases.

Intonation- is described as the music of speech. It encompasses the moments at which we change the pitch of our voices in order to give certain messages. It is related to the tone used during speech production. We can produce different utterances using the same words but using a different tone of voice.

Ex: Open the door. (request)

Open the door. (order)

As noted above the two intonation patterns described here are used with the great majority of English sentences. In the examples given below, each pattern consists of the three (usually) or two pitches and a single syllable with primary stress. In addition, one of the two arrows, rising or falling, is used to indicate the type of ending for a given phrase. For further clarity a linear representation of each intonation contour is placed above the individual examples

1. Used with statements, question word question, and commands:

a) **Statements:**

²James arrived ³yesterday¹.

b) **Question word question:**

²What are you ³dóing¹

c) **Commands:**

²Come ³hére¹.

1.6- Phonology-

Phonology and phonetics have a relationship of mutual dependence because they can not exist without each other. If phonetics provides all the technical background, phonology is defined as the field which deals with “the study of physiological, aerodynamic and acoustic characteristics of speech sounds... how the sound are organized into systems and used in languages” (Catford, 1988, p. 186-188).

Chapter II

Pronunciation in Foreign Language Learning

2.1-Interference of mother tongue and official language in learning a foreign language

Talking about the process of learning a foreign language, especially as a second or third language, the native or/and the official language plays a big role in this process, either as a help or as an obstacle. The mother tongue or native language is in most cases one's first language, the popular language spoken in one's country, although there some exceptions.

According to Quirk (1989), people may immigrate to a country where the language differs from their native language spoken. If they became proficient in the new language and they use it extensively, that non native language can become their first language displacing the native tongue (4).

Everybody knows that official language is the language people use in education, media, so we can say in formal situations.

The influence of these languages on learning a foreign language sometimes depends on the proximity they have with the language being learned. If they have the same origin, we can consider this helpful because the sounds and the words will be similar so they will be a positive background to enable the speaker to be proficient in the use of the foreign language. But, on the other hand, if they have no connection or relation to each other, the influence will be negative. The sounds and the words will be strange to the speaker, thus it will affect the process of learning.

Talking about the influence of Capeverdeans' native and official language in learning the English language, we can say that, although they do not have the same origin, as Portuguese has with Latin and English from Anglo-Saxons languages, their influence in terms of vocabulary is more positive than negative. The words are similar in many ways (ex: production-producao, adventure- aventura) and the English meaning in these cases is the same in Portuguese.

But we have to take in account that the new language is different in sentence structure, grammar and pronunciation. The grammar structures of English are different than in Portuguese and different syntaxes create sometimes a lot of misunderstanding and difficulties mainly when students are beginning to learning a second language.

In pronunciation, English and Portuguese are different, too. Letters have different corresponding phonetics symbols and sounds and the stresses are placed differently. When the students do not know what to do, they use the Portuguese form, which can cause big pronunciation and spelling errors.

Ex: Portuguese-Dicionário

English- Dictionary

In terms of pronunciation, words with similar spellings have different pronunciation and some sounds pronounced in English do not exist in Portuguese, making things more difficult.

An interesting aspect is the influence of native dialects on the pronunciation of English. People, according to their native land or country, have a different English accent. This is normal and this raises new English standards or varieties. What really matters is to pronounce correctly and be understood, but not necessarily to have the same pronunciation as a native speaker.

2.2-The importance of pronunciation in learning a foreign language

Pronunciation is considered one of the most important issues in the field of language. For the majority of the non native speakers or foreign learners the main objective is not to accurately manage the high standards of pronunciation, but to have the basic knowledge of the rules and elements of English pronunciation because according to Gimson (1989) “unless the learner expects to deal with English only in its written form, there is no escape from the acquisition of at least the rudimentary elements of English pronunciation.”

In Cape Verde, the teaching of pronunciation is based essentially on the teacher as the model. During their learning process, students come across different teachers with different English pronunciation and different academic levels. This can cause a mixture of pronunciation based on their teachers.

This is not a problem, because, as it has been said before, students do not have to manage a single, specific, standard of English. The problem may be the importance given to pronunciation because it is left according to the teacher’s criteria. Teachers sometimes believe that the more important aspects in learning English are grammatical ones, not necessarily the spoken aspects. Grammar is important, but we cannot forget that it alone is not enough to learn English, so we cannot use grammar without knowing how to speak. The Ministry of Education should provide a strategy in the schools to enable students to learn

pronunciation not only grammar rules, but also to be fluent, because languages are taught to be used in both written and oral communication.

2.3- Pronunciation in the Capeverdean syllabus

The national syllabus created in Cape Verde was revised in 1993 when the educational system was reformed. The new syllabus gives more attention to the communicative activities than the old one, emphasizing oral communication because of its importance in this stage of learning but without neglecting the other skills. The goal as far as languages are concerned, are to adapt the teaching strategies on the communicative approach, regard languages as an instrument of communication not only used for educational purposes, but for real communication situations. The syllabus points to the lack contact with English outside classroom, and overcrowded classrooms, mainly in first cycle, influence of the native and official languages, and differences in terms of conditions between Capeverdean schools in different parts of the country as major problems in learning English.

Although we have the positive aspects in the syllabus, the word pronunciation is not taken into consideration. The syllabus talks vaguely about oral communication, which is related to pronunciation but only the objectives are mentioned, not strategies or methods to achieve the objectives. Sometimes the teacher has to create his or her own strategies to teach pronunciation. So as a conclusion we can say that pronunciation has no place in the Capeverdean syllabus. There is nothing specific in the syllabus. Pronunciation is only mentioned in reading, so if a student has a bad pronunciation while reading the teacher sometimes takes the chance to correct him or her.

Many methodologists, teachers, researchers and others who work in educational field, sometimes base their research mainly in the advanced and intermediate levels and forget the first, which maybe the most important phase in the learning process.

According to Chlopek (1995) for a beginner everything is new and existing. She/He has heard many words, phrases, or songs in English; probably without understanding them and now his/her chance has come” (p. 52). In this stage everything is new, fresh, and the ideas and knowledge are being presented for the first time. This will determine the success or failure of the learning process.

As we know, everything begins in the first lessons. As people say, we should be taught when we are young, so if these lessons are taught in a funny, motivating and effective way the foundations for a good future learning process will be set. In the beginning level the

students will start acquiring their first and basic knowledge about the matters related to new subjects. This is where they will also start committing their first mistakes and where the first lackings and weaknesses will start taking root. So, the teachers play a big role in this early stage of learning. They have to guide their students, carefully and patiently in order to motivate them and cut the root of their first mistakes, while preparing their students for a solid foundation for the coming levels.

Talking particularly about pronunciation in the first levels, teachers have, first of all, to be prepared to transmit a good model of pronunciation to their students because that is better and more desirable to have them start pronouncing words correctly from the beginning instead of, as other people think, leave the utterances for advanced levels. Chopek (1995) argues that “The habits developed in the early stages of learning are the most important” (p. 53). Unfortunately, in some countries, it is the beginning levels where the majority of unqualified and inexperienced teachers are, and this can affect student’s leaning for the reasons above mentioned.

Chapter III

Teaching English Pronunciation in Cape Verde:

Methods and results.

This chapter is mainly based on the methods the teachers use to teach pronunciation in Cape Verde. It has the cooperation of many teachers from different islands that teach different levels, some trained at ISE, others abroad who answered some questions related to this topic. In their answer they talked about the resources available, so, sometimes they have to create their own resources, and they also talk about the problems they have in teaching pronunciation and difficulties the students have in learning.

3.1-Methods and Techniques used to teach pronunciation:

The method used to teach pronunciation is the communicative approach. The aims of this method are to make students use the language and become as fluent and as accurate as possible, pronouncing correctly in such a way that the speaker can be understood and participate in communication situations inside and outside classroom. Mistakes are normal because nobody is perfect, mainly in the learning process and students, through mistakes, can improve their performance and become better. With this approach a set of techniques are used to reach the objectives proposed.

These techniques for attending to pronunciation vary according to the level, the teacher, students and the conditions found along the teaching process. Based on a survey of several experienced beginning level Capeverdean teachers from different Capeverdean islands, I saw some consisted trends.

These strategies include:

1-Using tape recorders:

Based on interviews and questionnaires, teachers agree that using tape recorders is a very common technique for emphasizing pronunciation. Usually the course book used in our schools has some tape scripts of the dialogues and they, along with cassette tapes, are used for listening activities, repetitions and other activities. Although they are used mainly for listening, they are helpful in the teaching of pronunciation because students are exposed to a native speaker's pronunciation and to connected speech. When new words appear they will

listen to the correct way to pronounce them. When designed for beginners, the tapes contain sounds and words to be repeated, sentences, short dialogues and songs.

The ability to hear and identify various sounds is a listening skill, but good pronunciation depends on how well we hear what is spoken. Therefore, we include items of “hearing identification” as one kind of pronunciation test. These can be simple enough for little children and adult beginners. The hearing identification can combine pronunciation and meaning; this enables us to test students with rather limited language skills.

2-Repetitions:

Repetition is considered a very good technique for teaching pronunciation. Teachers in Cape Verde said that pronouncing the sounds, words or short sentences and having the students repeat them with their teacher’s pronunciation as the model works well. The oral repetitions items are useful for students who cannot read or write in English, because they can simply listen to what their teacher says to them and then repeat it. Yet oral repetition also has an advantage for those who are illiterate: reading skills are not mixed with pronunciation skills. But oral repetition has one major limitation. Some beginning students can mimic or imitate quite well, but they might not have developed much skill yet in pronouncing and using English. Therefore, results of an oral repetition test could indicate potential for learning English as much as present skill in using the language. Oral repetition is one of the easiest of all exams to prepare. No distractors are need; no clever sentence frames required, and no drawings need to be prepared.

This can be done individually or in choral pronunciation. It can be wonderfully adapted in Cape Verde because the only resources it requires are the teachers, the students and the classroom. That is why this is the most common method of pronunciation practice in our country. And, if the teacher has good pronunciation, students will learn the correct pronunciation quickly.

3-Reading for pronunciation:

Reading for pronunciation is a technique not only to improve student’s pronunciation but other skills too.

Teachers ask students to individually read a text and while they are reading the teacher will listen, making corrections when it is necessary and asking students to read the word again until they succeed in having the correct pronunciation. This is helpful for teachers because it helps them diagnose student’s weaknesses and uses some alternative techniques to

overcome difficulties. It is easy to be used in class because our language is mostly based on the course books and texts can be used. Reading aloud also like oral repetition provides excellent control. One problem, however, is that the skill of reading aloud is different from that of talking conversationally. It is limited to those who can read, and there is not a direct relationship between ability to read and pronunciation in normal conversation. But it has its advantages because they are easy to prepare, they test almost all pronunciation features, and they can test how to pronounce spelling combinations.

4-Using songs:

This technique is not used as often as it should be, but teachers surveyed agreed this is a very impactful technique. It is a very motivating technique and teachers can use songs that are in the course book or famous pop songs or also native songs that are easily adapted to the target level. Teachers use tapes, cds or have live performance in class. With beginners, this can bring some problems in terms of classroom management but is a useful technique to expose students to real communication situations and test their receptive skill. It also can show students other way of pronouncing, different than the academic pattern they are used to. Another way to teach pronunciation noted is when the teacher writes on the board the lyrics and sings alone for the first time, and then asks the students to repeat correcting them when necessary. This can be easier than tape recorders, because the teacher's voice is sometimes more clear. Music is a very motivational tool of which students consistently respond positively.

3.2-Problems found during pronunciation teaching

According to interviews and surveys, there are several problems that occur during pronunciation teaching

Not only Cape Verde, but many countries face some problems in supporting their educational system. These difficulties are mainly economic, which affect all the other areas of this essential factor for the development of any society.

The teachers I interviewed have noticed that the main problems found during the teaching of pronunciation are the lack of support materials. There are no language laboratories and the few that exist, are not often used because they lack support resources such as tapes, work books, flash cards and other materials that can be useful to support pronunciation teaching. These labs also lack people to manage them. We cannot find any

language laboratory in any high school in Cape Verde, not even the Instituto Superior de Educação (ISE).

As a solution for these problems, teachers suggest tape recorders, although this cannot be a substitute for laboratories. Tape recorders are a little useful for listening but better for the advanced levels, because for the beginners it can be very difficult as they are in contact with a new language for the first time. But not only the schools have tape recorders, and the ones that have them sometimes have old models and the listening is affected by this. Our Cape Verde classrooms sometimes do not have the acoustic conditions for good listening.

Teachers also expressed that the problem is that the Ministry of Education overcrowds the classrooms with 35 to 40 students, mainly in the beginning levels which is a problem. It is difficult to manage the classroom because they are always talking and the teacher has to call for their attention, and the attention given to students speaking skills sometimes is not the ideal. The students, especially the less communicative ones, will have few opportunities to speak and improve their pronunciation, from teacher's correction and practice because there are so many students. According to Babda, (1993) "One of the greatest problems in oral testing is administration. It is often impossible to manage the large number of students to be tested" (p.20).

The model for teaching pronunciation to beginners is different than the model for teaching intermediate or advanced students because with the first level this process is more delicate. Everything is new for these students so the teachers admit speaking more Portuguese than English. Everything has to be written on the board, the teacher has to read it and ask the students to repeat. Sometimes the students do not have interest in learning, they do not like to repeat the same thing many times, and they laugh at it.

Another problem reported is that some teachers do not give attention to pronunciation mainly at the beginning level and when the students arrive at the advanced level, they still have pronunciation problems because they do not have the basics from the first level. The students' progress at school takes place on this because during their learning process, they have different teachers almost every year. This is bad because each teacher has his or her own style and methods. Every year the teachers have to learn all of the student's strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes it is hard to realize students' characteristics and is too late to help them. Teachers reported that maintaining the same teacher would help.

The teachers also have difficulty controlling the class mainly with beginners, during motivating speaking and listening activities because at the beginning levels, students have an energetic way of express their excitement. They tend to lose focus more easily.

3.3-Capeverdean teachers

Everybody knows that teachers are the base of any learning process because they are the model. They are supposed to guide the students; they are the source of information. When they are teaching languages, they are the student's guide to be followed. In our Cape Verde system, the lack of qualified teachers is one of the biggest problems and this is for several reasons. Although the Instituto Superior de Educação (ISE) for teachers training exists, the number of teachers who have completed their degrees are not enough to fulfill the teaching needs of our schools.

Another problem with Cape Verdean teachers is that they are not becoming teachers for the right reasons. Sometimes people despise this profession because they think it is a poor paying job, and they do not want to deal with kids and teenagers. Sometimes the Ministry of Education is obliged to allow unqualified teachers to teach, in order to overcome the lack of qualified teachers. These teachers are people graduating in other areas that had studied in countries where English is spoken, or people who have finished high school, or people from Peace Corps that sometimes are not planning to spend a lot of time in Cape Verde.

3.3.1-Native vs. Non-native English speakers

We have confirmed that here in Cape Verde we can find both native and non-native speakers teaching English. Capeverdean English teachers who have learned their English as their third language speak and pronounce differently than a native English speaker. We have to take into account that the teachers are very important in teaching pronunciation, especially with beginners, because Capeverdeans have a clear understanding of our reality, our strengths and weaknesses, so they know the points to emphasize, and have learned the language before the students learning English (Creole, Portuguese, or French) and have dealt with the interferences of those languages in English. Capeverdean teachers are in a better condition to explain to their students in Creole or Portuguese something they do not understand. So the teachers speak clearly, without regional accent influences, and they are able to make comparisons with the previous languages learned in order to make students' learning easier. If a particular standard is required to be taught, they are more flexible and they can better adapt to teaching it.

Having native speakers of English teaching, on the other hand, can have some advantages. They can speak the language fluently and students, by the exposure to connected

speech, can be aware of its features such as elision, hesitations, false starts, repetitions, and be prepared for real life communication situations. Of course it is easier to teach intermediate and advanced students because they are able to understand a native speaker of English better than a beginner. The teachers are supposed to speak /explain mainly in Portuguese, at the beginning level so the exposure can be helpful for the intermediate and advanced learners, but can be confusing for beginners.

3.32- Qualified vs. Unqualified teachers

The Ministry of Education has as its main objectives to provide a high level of education. Achieving this goal is essential for having a body of qualified teachers. Qualified teachers, because of their Academic background, are aware of all aspects that surround the learning process. But the teachers who do not have experience sometimes are ignorant of the smallest, but maybe the most important aspects of learning. Besides their training in their specific subject, qualified teachers have some notions on pedagogic matters, which help them a lot to deal with students needs.

Dealing with pronunciation, with beginners, qualified teachers are the basis of good learning. They know the individual sounds well in connected speech of English, and they are relatively fluent. All these skills allow them to correct students technically and pedagogically. Being taught by qualified teachers is the more likely way for students to succeed.

Unfortunately we still have lots of unqualified teachers here in Cape Verde and the majority work with beginners. Of course this can be a problem because involuntarily they can let pronunciation mistakes pass without correction and this may become a big problem in the future. Here we can see how a teacher's interest or lack of interest in teaching pronunciation can affect students learning.

3.4- Standard

Languages, especially in large countries, vary from region to region, and Cape Verde is no different because we have lots of islands with different dialects. If the written form stays the same or takes more time to change, the spoken form is more exposed to changes. So in order to avoid misunderstandings, there is a model, called a standard, used as the unifier of all these varieties and is to be used in formal occasions. This model, used in the court, in universities, and by the government, is considered the correct form and it can be

used to mark social positions, show your level of education or intelligence, or even to show if you are from the city or from the countryside.

For a long time, a British model, Received Pronunciation (RP), was considered the best standard of English for many reasons: Great Britain was/is a rich and important country, it was a big metropolis, with several colonies spread all over the world, it had, and still has big universities, such as Cambridge, Oxford and others, where the London variety was spoken and taught. According to, Gimson (1989) “Pronunciation was, therefore, a marker of position in society” (p. 85).

After the Second World War, the United States, because of their economic and military power, took the lead of the big political issues in the world and their pronunciation model started displacing the British model. Now the two models are accepted, and, according to Quirk (1985) “The choice between them depends on various factors: Whether the country was formerly a British or a United States colony; its proximity to Britain or the U.S: Which of the two had most influenced its economic, scientific or cultural development: on current commercial relations” (p. 7).

In our country the standard pronunciation taught in school depends on the teacher’s nationality, academic level, the place he or she studied, or the kind of teacher he or she had.

If they studied in the U.S. they would adopt the American standard, and if they studied in U.K. or in European countries, they tend to adopt the British variety.

Teachers who studied in Cape Verde, at ISE, have a mixed pronunciation. They have come across both standards and other varieties. It is a common situation and, “... in some countries both American and British standard are taught, sometimes in different institutions, sometimes in the same institution” (Quirk, 1985, p. 7). It can be, instead of a disadvantage, an advantage because they become aware of the particularities of each standard.

Before Capeverdean students start learning English, they are more exposed to American English for cultural reasons. Teenagers like pop culture (movies, songs), and they use some American expressions. The American standard also has emphasis because of a great number of American teachers who come to Cape Verde every year.

When the teachers have students influenced by American culture, we hear them using expressions such as: “wanna” and “yeah.” Teachers are supposed to know how to deal with such situations, correcting and making their pronunciation educationally acceptable by trying to use this knowledge as a base for their student’s future learning of English.

3.5-Weaknesses found in Capeverdean student's pronunciation

Normally when Capeverdean students begin to learn English, the first obstacle they find is that they are studying a foreign language and consequently that they are non-native speakers. Their native language – Creole- and their official language –Portuguese- although sometimes similar, are different than English both in terms of writing and pronunciation, and their influence will affect the acquisition of other languages, in this case the English language.

Since the time they were children, Capeverdean students speak creole and have six years of Portuguese experience before starting to learn English. Their vocal tract is used to produce the sounds existent in both languages and one of the main weaknesses students have is pronouncing sounds in English.

We can see that their first reaction in order to overcome this problem is to associate these sounds to the similar ones that already exist in their native or official languages. It happens, for example, with the alveo-palatal and fricative sounds θ (think) and δ (mother), the glottal r (car), the long vowels (cheese, food, peace) the glottal \wedge (but) and their pronunciation will have a Portuguese or Creole influence. θInk is pronounced $t\text{Ink}$, $m^{\wedge}\delta\hat{o}r$ - $m\acute{a}d\hat{o}r$, $ka:-kar$, $t\text{I}:\text{Z}-t\text{I}:\text{Z}$, $b\wedge t$ - bat . Another problem is about the pronunciation of “ed” at the end of some words. There examples of words in past tense that makes reference to these problems. Ex: liked- lagged. These words are spelled with - ed at the end. However, that the past tense ending is pronounced differently in the two words. Further more, in neither case is it pronounced as two sounds but rather it is pronounced as a single consonant sound. The past tense ending of the word liked is pronounced as /t/; and in the word lagged is pronounced as /d/. Is the choice of /t/ or /d/ just random or is there some regularity that will allow us to predict the pronunciation of the past tense? By examining the phonetics characteristics of the sounds surroundings these past tense endings, a way in which the predicable choice is shown. Recall that the difference between /t/ and /d/ is a difference in voicing. Both are pronounced with the tip of tongue touching the tooth ridge, but /t/ is voiceless and the /d/ is voiced. If the final sound of the verb to which the past tense is attached is voiceless, the past tense is pronounced as/t/. This is the case with the verbs such as “like”. Other verbs like –rope- which ends with the voiceless sound /p/, has the past tense pronounced as /t/. If the final sound of the verb to which the past tense is attached is voiced, the past tense is pronounced as /d/. This is the case with the verbs like “lagge” for example “rob” which ends in the voiced sound /b/, has the past tense pronounced as /d/.

Some other verbs pronounced like: wanted, deleted, handed or surround in the past tense are not pronounced as a /t/ or a /d/ sound. Again, these are perfectly regular verbs and the pronunciation of the past tense ending is entirely predicable. If the verb to which the past tense is attached ends with a /t/ or a /d/, the past tense is pronounced as /ɒd/.

The past tense ending of a verb that ends with a vowel is pronounced as /d/. This is because all vowels are voiced. To confirm this we are supposed to pronounce the words like: flowed, glued, prayed.

There is a rule applied to all verbs that have the regular past tense ending:

A: If a verb ends with /t/ or /d/, the past tense is pronounced /ɒd/.

B: If a verb ends with a voiced sound, the past tense is pronounced /d/.

C: If a verb ends with a voiceless sound, the past tense is pronounced /t/.

The connected speech is, also, one of the weaknesses of Capeverdean students and particularly beginners. Normally at the beginning, students only learn how to pronounce sounds in isolation, and when they come across sentences or dialogues they are not able to understand, it is probably because they are not aware of the features of the spoken English. Consequently, when they listen to connected speech, there are very few chances for them to understand it. Students also have the same problem the other way around. Their pronunciation is mechanical, and they cannot use the features of spoken English (stress, rhythm, intonation). The reason for this disability is, in fact, that several people, even famous authors, think that beginners should not worry about these matters and leave them for the advanced levels.

Instead, they should worry about other matters, like grammar and/or vocabulary. According to Hubbard (1986) “pronunciation should be an integral part of an English teaching programme from the early stages, just as the teaching of vocabulary.” (p. 207). One of the reasons for this problem is the influence of the Portuguese language. In Portuguese, when someone wants to show that a word is stressed they use accents (Ex: Port-Évora). In English we use stress marks (Engl. - /'Evora/) to emphasize the part that should be stressed. So, by the description above it can be inferred that the majority of the weaknesses are due to the influence of Portuguese on English learning.

Chapter IV

Solutions

4.1- Approach taken by the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education, as the institution responsible for the Cape Verdean educational system, tries extremely hard to make decisions in order to improve the quality of education in the schools. Because of this, important decisions are made and although their aim is not to improve the conditions to favour a particular subject but the system in general, some of these decisions influence positively the teaching of English pronunciation in our schools.

All the Caperverdean schools teach from the same national syllabus. This is a good way to try to keep the most structure possible in the system, avoiding excessive freedom for teachers and achieving the main objectives proposed at the beginning of the school year. Since, at least theoretically, oral communication and pronunciation are relevant aspects to be taken into account, having a uniform curriculum and objectives for all the national schools, helps give pronunciation the importance it should have.

For many years, the Ministry of Education has been building high schools all around Cape Verde. This is very important for the improvement of the quality of our education because with enough schools we can reduce the number of students per classroom and solve one of the biggest problems we face - overcrowded classrooms. This can help language classes a lot because the class will be less noisy, teachers can give more attention to each student and students will have more opportunities to practice the language and improve their speaking skills. Teachers can also be aware of students' difficulties and have a real idea of the individual level of their students because in overcrowded classes not all the students have the chance to participate. Usually in a classroom, better students participate sometimes giving the teacher the wrong impression about their students' skills.

Another advantage is that the new schools are more modern and are built to use new technology in education, such as laboratories, audiovisual rooms, conferences rooms and so on. But these conditions are not being used because of the lack of experts to deal with the new technology.

Some years ago the Ministry of Education started training teachers, with the aim was of overcoming the lack of unqualified teachers in our schools as a consequence of the "massification" of education in Cape Verde after its independence. Despite these efforts, the

lack of teachers still exists. English teachers training courses are in demand and presently many English courses are open. Increasing the number of qualified teachers brings a lot of benefits. These teachers are trained according to the needs of our country.

Another thing is the coordination meetings. One of the ways the Ministry of Education guarantees that teachers are following the direction of the syllabus, to see the problems in the education system, and provide exchange of knowledge between all teachers, are coordination meetings. English teachers have regular meetings or forums where the aim was to exchange their experiences, knowledge and talk about the best methods and techniques and other relevant issues related to language teaching. This is very good especially for inexperienced and unqualified teachers because they can listen to other colleagues and learn new things that can help them to overcome the difficulties that appear in their daily teaching routines with obvious benefits for students. These coordination meetings are also useful in linking the contents from one year to the other, avoiding repletion and omission of topics.

4.2-Alternative Solutions

As we can see in the solutions mentioned above, although teachers can help a little to improve the teaching of English pronunciation in Cape Verde, there are not enough to teach that area of English language (pronunciation). When we think about pronunciation teaching, we have to take into account the following solutions, and they could be a big help for the improvement of pronunciation teaching in Cape Verde.

1st-Increase of English class time load

As we know, high school have 4-one hour classes for beginners and 3-one hour for the other levels per week. If we keep in mind all the content being taught throughout the year, this amount of classroom time is not enough. Even though, the majority of the teachers prefer to focus more on grammar than on other matters that normally appear in written tests, this is the basis of the evaluation system. As a result, other matters are neglected and oral communication will be left behind.

To overcome this kind of problem, an increase in the time load, an extra hour, in every cycle is need. Also, we should have some time for beginners in order to teach them something about pronunciation and English communication practice. This time should be spent mainly in laboratories or working with tape recorders or other communicative

activities. The aim of these sessions would be mainly to focus on accuracy and pronunciation. Only in this way, will these matters have their own place.

2nd- Increasing the amount of support materials and conditions for pronunciation teaching.

Everybody knows that Cape Verde is a poor country, so people should understand the conditions available for a quality educational system. It cannot be continually said that Cape Verde is poor and does not have ideal conditions, so pronunciation has to be taught through repetition as lots of people say. Instead of this, it should be taught that if a grain of pronunciation instructions, is sown a group of well speaking English students would be grown. If an effort is made, I am sure that the future profits will be much more than we have gained so far.

3rd-Train teachers in specific language teaching areas

It is unanimous that support materials are essential for language and pronunciation teaching, but it is also true, that these materials alone cannot minimize these problems. Having qualified teachers trained in specific areas as phonetics, phonology, laboratories, pronunciation, will make better use of the materials. Although there is a teacher training school in our country –ISE, they cannot, yet, help to solve this problem because they give general courses, not specialized pronunciation and laboratory skills courses. It is a lack that, if overcome, would bring several benefits for students and even for teachers because the more knowledge teachers have in a specific area, the more efficient they will be in the transmission of the knowledge, making the teaching- learning process more efficient and more productive.

4th-Start as early as possible with phonetics notions

In the beginning level, mainly in any learning process, it is very important to start focusing on all aspects related to the matters learned. The more explanations you give the clearer it will become. Talking about language teaching as a process, all the aspects should be taught, even the more difficult ones as, for example, phonetics. If students know phonetics notions, when they use the dictionary, they can see and understand the correct way to pronounce the word by identifying the correspondent phonetic transcription. It is better to include phonetics in the matters taught in the first cycle (at least at 8th grade) to avoid the

fossilizing of pronunciation errors and to help develop a high level of performance by students.

5th- *Give pronunciation its place in the curriculum*

In few years, people related to the educational system have been recognizing the importance of interaction and communication inside the class room. Sometimes students have some difficulties answering some questions because they do not know how to pronounce a certain word or sometimes they feel shy if they mispronounce a word, so they prefer to keep quiet. Therefore, the communicative approach has become very popular and its use has been increasing in our classrooms to encourage students. On the other hand the syllabus is still a problem. Despite all these facts mentioned, it is more or less the same as it was a few years ago. It should be clearly written that there is a place and time to be devoted to communication activities and pronunciation, and the importance they have among the other matters and in the acquisition of the English language. Otherwise, it will depend on teachers, and according to their style, more or less time will be devoted to pronunciation.

Note: See **Appendix F** for other solutions.

Conclusion

After all of the literature and my collected research and ideas, it can be concluded that pronunciation is one of the aspects neglected in the Capeverdean Educational System. Despite the mention of communicative activities in the syllabus, teachers are still putting oral communication behind grammar and vocabulary. Teachers do it for several reasons. The evaluation system in Cape Verde is based exclusively on written tests, where students have to do reading comprehension and grammar exercises. There are some exceptions for writing or listening exercises, while speaking activities are not given attention at all. We can make an effort to understand that teachers try to use the short time available covering the aspects people consider the most relevant based on the national evaluation. Students, like the teachers, behave the same way. Since speaking is not tested, or if it is, does have a substantial importance in grade, they neglected it.

Another problem teacher's find when teaching pronunciation are the material conditions. There is a lack of structures, materials and other problems, and specially poverty that does not help to solve the lack of resources

Despite all these bad conditions, teachers try to do the best they can to make their teaching as profitable and efficient as possible and in most cases they do it successfully. However, there are some aspects that can make their work more difficult. Some of our Cape Verdean teachers do not have good pronunciation and because they are not qualified to teach, they cannot understand certain aspects that, although seemingly insignificant, are crucial in the teaching of English pronunciation.

But the picture is not as dark as it seems to be. The government, in general, and the Ministry of Education, in particular, have been working, organizing workshops, conferences trying to re-structure the Capeverdean syllabus. They are doing this to overcome the difficulties students and teachers face. Even if the decisions have nothing to do specifically with pronunciation they will contribute indirectly in improving our teaching.

People also have to change their attitudes and give pronunciation its importance and especially the importance of English language in the present "globalized" world. It is very important to master this language in all forms from writing to speaking. Pronunciation does not yet have the place it deserves in the teaching of English in Cape Verde, but hopefully in a near future it will.

Many aspects related to pronunciation, in which people have to take into account or be aware of were also referred in this work. So we need to make students become comfortable with the notions that incomprehensibility in whatever form or context is a legitimate and expected part of the communication process. Encouragement to understand what lies behind the misunderstanding, and what strategies might be employed to ensure continued communication while specific aspects of pronunciation are developed, serves the learner well on the long road to fluency.

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Appendices

